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## GYNECOLOGICAL CHECK-UP

He knows me better than I know myself  
 having delivered me of two.  
 I see down to my navel, the white sheet  
 hiding my parted legs from me.  
 Slow, smooth, and cool the probe insinuates.  
 "Beautiful," his voice floats up  
 from where he crouches on his sibyl's stool.  
 "Everything's perfect." He comes up smiling.

Years back, when that dead foetus  
 would not leave my womb,  
 he did not talk until we sat, I fully clothed,  
 he in authority behind his desk,  
 as though my dress  
 could make that death  
 respectable.

JEAN HOLLANDER<sup>®</sup>  
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